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ACTION EUR-12

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M AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
O SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5535
NFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
MEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
MEMBASSY ROME
SMISSION USUN NEW YORK

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(X) Release () Excise () Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: () In Part (X) In Full

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Date Declassify on Reason

[REDACTED] BUENOS AIRES 6297

O 12356: DECL: OADR
AGS: SHUM, PINT, AR
UBJECT: PRESS REPORTS OF ITALIAN DISAPPEARANCES COMPLICATE
TALIAN-ARGENTINE RELATIONS

(U) ARGENTINE NEWSPAPERS HAVE GIVEN WIDE COVERAGE TO
TALIAN PRESS REPORTS CONCERNING ITALIANS WHO DISAPPEARED DURING
RGENTINA'S TERRORISM AND COUNTER-TERRORISM IN THE MID AND LATE
970'S. RECENT PUBLICITY GIVEN TO THE EXISTENCE OF LARGE NUMBERS
F UNMARKED GRAVES IN SEVERAL CEMETERIES IN THE BUENOS AIRES AREA
BA 6152 NOTAL) APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN THE SPARK THAT SET OFF ITAL-
AN PRESS INTEREST. ACCORDING TO ITALIAN REPORTS CARRIED HER,
HE GOI HAS REPEATEDLY ASKED THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT FOR INFOR-
ATION ON THE DISAPPEARANCES. THE GOI HELD BACK FROM PUBLICLY
ISCUSSING THESE CASES FOR FEAR THAT IT WOULD BE COUNTER-PRODUC-
IVE. HOWEVER, AS THERE HAD BEEN NO PROGRESS AFTER SIX YEARS,
HE ITALIAN NEWSPAPERS PUBLISHED THE NAMES OF THE ALLEGED DIS-
PPEARED ITALIANS; A LIST WAS REPORTEDLY OBTAINED FROM THE ITAL-
AN FOREIGN MINISTRY. ON NOVEMBER 2, GOA PRESIDENT BIGNONE REPLIED
HAT HE HAD NO COMMENT WHEN ASKED BY THE PRESS FOR HIS REACTION

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O GOI REQUESTS ABOUT THE DISAPPEARANCES.

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2. [REDACTED] ON NOVEMBER 3, EMBOFF MET WITH ITALIAN EMBASSY HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICER, GUIDO GUIVANNINI, TO DISCUSS THE ISSUE OF THE ITALIAN DISAPPEARANCES. GIOVANNINI CONFIRMED THAT HE HAD RECORDS OF APPROXIMATELY 370 DISAPPEARANCES OF WHICH 40 WERE ITALIAN CITIZENS, 257 WERE DUAL NATIONALS (ITALO-ARGENTINES) AND BETWEEN 70 AND 75 WERE OF DIRECT ITALIAN ORIGIN BUT NOT ITALIAN CITIZENS. HE ADDED THAT THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 65 DETAINEES (PEN AND MILITARY) IN THESE THREE CATEGORIES. (FYI: IN THE COURSE OF THE CONVERSATION, EMBOFF INFORMED GIOVANNINI THAT AN EXAMINATION OF POST RECORDS SHOWS NO U.S. CITIZENS AS HAVING DISAPPEARED. END FYI)

3. [REDACTED] GIOVANNINI CONFIRMED THAT SINCE 1976 THE GOA HAD NOT REPLIED WITH CONCRETE INFORMATION TO ANY OF THE GOI'S NUMEROUS OFFICIAL REQUESTS. HE CONFIRMED PRESS REPORTS HERE THAT ITALIAN AMBASSADOR KOCIANCICH MET WITH GOA INTERIOR MINISTER LLAMIL RESTON NOVEMBER 2. GIOVANNINI SAID THAT RESTON OFFERED NO CONCRETE ASSISTANCE AND THAT KOCIANCICH IS UNSATISFIED WITH GOA UNRESPONSIVENESS.

4. [REDACTED] GIOVANNINI SAID THAT GOA AND GOI RELATIONS ARE SUDDENLY STRAINED AND HE PREDICTED THEY WOULD CONTINUE TO BE SO FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS BECAUSE ITALIAN REACTION AGAINST THE GOA WAS STILL GROWING. BUSHNELL

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